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# LETTERS OF A LUNATIC,

OR

A BRIEF EXPOSITION OF MY UNIVERSITY LIFE,

DURING THE YEARS 1853—54

BY

G. J. ADLER, A.M.,

PROFESSOR OF GERMAN LITERATURE IN THE UNIVERSITY OF THE CITY OF NEW-YORK,  
MEMBER OF THE AMERICAN ORIENTAL, AND OF THE AMERICAN  
ETHNOLOGICAL SOCIETIES, &c. &c.

*Spectatum admissi risum teneatis, amici?*

*Horat. Ars Poet. v. 5*

*μή νύ τοι οὐ χραίστην σκήπτρον καὶ στέμμα θεοῖο!*

*Iliad I. v. 28.*

PRINTED FOR THE AUTHOR.

1854.



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## PREFATORY NOTE TO THE PUBLIC.

IN a recent publication on German Literature, I hinted to the reader my design of giving an account of an event in my personal history, which I alleged to be the cause of an absentment from my proper place of study, and consequently of an injustice to my public. I now proceed to fulfil my promise, by offering to my personal friends, and to such as are interested in matters of academic education and morality, a few of the many letters written by me during the past year. I might have added others, both of an anterior and of a more recent date. The question however was not to write a volume, but simply a brief exposition, of a page or two from my life in connection with a public institution of the metropolis, and thus to bring a matter of private and iniquitous dispute before the forum of the public, after having vainly sought redress in private. My main object was of course to vindicate and defend my character, my professional honor and my most sacred rights as a rational man and as a public educator, against the invasions of narrow-minded and unjust aggressors, whose machinations have for several years been busily at work in subverting what other men have reared before them, in retarding and impeding what the intelligence of our age and country is eager to accelerate and to promote. The much agitated question of Uni-

versity reform and of the liberty of academic instruction, which of late years has engaged the attention of some of the best intellects on both sides of the Atlantic, and which within a month past has again occupied the public mind, and even called forth legislative intervention may, however, perhaps likewise receive some additional light from the following pages, which I now submit, not from any motive of vanity, or from the expectation of self-aggrandisement or of histrionic applause; but from a sense of duty to the cause of liberal culture and of sound morality, to which I have devoted many a year of laborious effort and of earnest thought.

NEW-YORK UNIVERSITY, }  
*June*, 1854. }

G. J. A.

## LETTER I.

NEW-YORK UNIVERSITY, SEPT. 10th, 1853.

REV. ISAAC FERRIS, D. D.

Dear Sir,—I deem it a duty of justice towards myself, as well as to the honor of the Institution of which I am an officer and yourself the newly-elected head, to bring to your consideration a few circumstances from the history of our incidental intercourse during the past winter, which at the time of occurrence, struck me with painful surprise, and which I cannot suffer to pass without my most earnest protestations.

1st, During the earlier part of the winter, in passing out of my lecture-room one morning, I met you in the hall of the University with a pale face, asking me in the most uncalled-for and singular manner the strange question :—" *Are you my superior?*"—The reply, which I ought to have written on the spot to such an enquiry, I would now make by saying, that such an idea never occurred to me, and that, as I had never seen any thing of your presence in the actual performance of duty in the University at the time of my instruction to the students, such an idea *never could have suggested itself* to me. The question of superiority or inferiority being, moreover, of a relative nature and one that (in our profession) can only be settled by actual services rendered to the cause of letters and by actual acknowledgements obtained in a proper manner and from competent judges, it would be folly for me or for any one else to attempt to place it on any other ground ; and for that reason I never touch it, although I am always ready to acknowledge both moral and intellectual superiority, wherever I become aware of its existence.

2d, On a second occasion, I met you by accident in the hall before my door, when to my equal surprise, you informed me by indefinite murmurs and in the same painful half-way-utterance, "*that I had the chapel,*" and "*that I was in the next church,*" pointing to Dr. HUTTON'S. This cannot possibly be the case, as I am not of your persuasion in matters of

religion, and if I am to communicate any instruction in the Institution, it must be done in the usual way.

3d, During the horrid disorders within the Institution the past winter, I repeatedly heard vociferous declamations in the adjoining room, and at one time the famous words of PATRICK HENRY were declaimed by Mr. BENNET (I think) of the last class: "*Give me liberty, or give me death!*" fearfully emphasized, and *your own voice* echoed: "*Death you shall have!*" As at that particular time I underwent the crucifixion of college-disorder, at the same time receiving occasional intimations that either in my speculations or in my instruction *I was going too far*, and that on that account it was necessary for me to leave, I cannot possibly be mistaken in supposing, *that both that horrible word of yours*, as well as the frequent scandalous vociferations were intended as an insult for me; (and, *if that is so*, I would most respectfully beg leave to reciprocate the compliment).

4th, At the dinner of the Alumni my attention along with that of all the rest of the assembled guests was directed towards you, at the time you rose to speak. While yet standing, you turned towards me with a peculiar expression of countenance (which I beg you to allow me to reciprocate) and in an under-tone (distinctly audible to me) asked the guests of the opposite side of the room (between whom and yourself there appears to have been a collusion): *Shall I have to become the step-father of that man?* and again in the same tone and with the same expression of countenance: "*Next year I shall see another man in that man's place!*" The subsequent exchange of salutations over Prof. MARTIN was ironical on your part, and independently of the rudeness of the act, wholly out of place. No one else present was treated in the same way.—In regard to the last expression, with which you honored me on that occasion, I would say, that by the repetition of the scenes of immorality and disorder of which this building was the theatre (in the most odious sense of that term) during the past year, such an event might be possible, not however without some troublesome resistance on my part and *the prospect of another change*.—In regard to the first question, I will myself take the responsibility of a reply, by frankly informing you, that, although I do not feel the slightest inclination to question the responsible honor of your office, and with due deference to the reputation for moral integrity (of your *scholarship* I have never seen any proof), which must have secured the same to you, I nevertheless most emphatically decline such paternal supervision—having for many years past been myself of full age, and even won a place *as a man* among the men



and scholars of our land. And this I purpose to maintain, whether I am in the University, or out of it. I must, therefore, beg you *to take back the offensive words at the next dinner as publicly as they were uttered*, or else I shall be obliged to take measures in defence of my honor, which, painful and disagreeable as they would be to me, would nevertheless be a necessary duty of self-protection. As for my peculiar views and position with reference to questions of scholarship and education, I have undergone no change of opinion whatever, nor could I undergo one, unless it were the necessary consequence of a rational conviction; and I shall have my hands full for some years to come, to write out and publish what I have but imperfectly and in a desultory manner indicated in my lectures and conversations; and while I am convinced that in many respects I have (as is usual) been voluntarily and involuntarily misunderstood, I am sure, that in the main I am right, and entitled to a hearing or a reading, whether, as has been intimated to me, I go too far or not.—In regard to the many scandalous interruptions by spectral noises (by day and by night), of which I well remember the chief authors, and in regard to my other persecutions, I am aware, that they can only be the subject of commiseration and of merited contempt, and that under the given circumstances, it would be difficult to obtain redress or justice. I shall, however, procure some legal advice on the subject. Allow me, in conclusion, Sir, to assure you of the absence of all hostile personal feeling on my part. I have said what my duty imperatively demands, and my silence would have made me a villain, justly liable to perpetual abuse.

I am, Dear Sir,

with the most distinguished consideration,

Yours, &c.

G. J. ADLER.

## LETTER -II.

NEW-YORK UNIVERSITY, SEPT. 12th, 1853.

TO HIS HONOR, THE MAYOR }  
 OF THE CITY OF NEW-YORK. }

[- Dear Sir,—I deem it my duty as a citizen of New-York, and a member of a literary institution, of which your Honor is *ex-officio* an officer, to apprize you of a fact of my personal history during the past winter, which as it is intimately connected with the maintenance of social order, should not for one moment be passed over by the authorities of the municipal corporation. I have for a number of years past been connected with the University of the city New-York, first as a resident graduate and lately as the Professor of a modern language, and have ever since my connection with the institution resided in the building on Washington Square, spending most of my time in authorship and instruction in a room, which for several years I have occupied for that purpose. In consequence of some bad feeling towards me on the part of certain enemies of mine, who of late have done all in their power to annoy me, the quiet of my residence has been disturbed in a scandalous manner, by day and at all hours of the night, for weeks and months together, so as to inflict on me the torments of perpetual interruption not only in my work during the day, but of rest during the night, until my health was completely shattered; and in this miserable manner I have lost nearly the whole of last winter without accomplishing any of my purposes with satisfaction or comfort. This outrageous annoyance has been the source of severe loss to me not only in regard to my health, but also in a pecuniary point of view. My salary in the institution being altogether inadequate for my support, I have been engaged for a number of years past in preparing works for publication, and this winter the ruin of my health from the causes already mentioned has also threatened me with the ruin of my income. As this villainous business has proceeded in part from the institution itself, or rather from individuals personally hostile to me and to my purposes, I deem an address to your Honor so much the more in place, as I believe it to be officially your duty to interpose your municipal authority in matters of this kind, and to reprimand or punish men for the immorality of so flagrant a disturbance of the peace. As my ears have almost daily been wounded by disorderly noises, not only from students, but (and mostly) from other

persons, who ought to blush for such base conduct, I cannot say, that I am unacquainted with the authors of the nuisance, and could easily designate to you at least half a dozen. Such cries as "Go on! Stop!—Out of the institution with that man!—Kill him!" besides multitudes of vulgar chuckles, screams and other horrid vociferations have been heard by me from well-known voices, until at times I felt as if I could support the vexation no longer. Numberless insults in the street and even menaces were constantly thrown out by a low gang, who were evidently hired for the vile purpose, and I have seen things, which I never witnessed before either in Europe or America. A certain firm of this city seems to have commenced the nefarious hostilities. I have suffered encroachments on my personal safety to which no American citizen ought for one moment to submit. As I cannot afford, nor feel inclined to lose my time and health any longer, I would respectfully submit to your Honor's consideration *my claim to the protection of the laws of the city* in this respect, to which as an American citizen I am entitled, and the necessity of a sterner maintenance of order by the police of the city. Disagreeable and painful as it is for any one to come into hostile collision with fellow-citizens, there are nevertheless cases, in which such enmities may be innocently contracted, and holding mine to be of such a nature, I may confidently expect the ready and effectual interposition of your Honor and of the honorable members of the Common Council, to whom the order and honor of the city must ever be dear, in a matter that seems to me to involve one of the most cherished principles of our republican freedom, viz., the personal safety and peaceable domicile of every member of our community, of every citizen of this vast republic.

To sum up my complaints briefly, they are as follows:—1st, Personal hostility towards me in the institution itself; 2dly, Horrid footsteps, noises and loud conferences under my window by day and by night; 3dly, Menacing insults from low people in the street, without the slightest provocation on my part.

Trusting that your Honor may find an early occasion to give me an opportunity for finding my firm conviction true, that the majesty of the law is capable of being upheld by its representatives in the community, and that I may have a different tale to tell respecting the morality of the city and my own sense of personal safety,

I am your Honor's

most respectful and obedient servant.

G. J. ADLER.

## L E T T E R   I I I. — (Answer to No. I.)

REV. DR.—

Dear Sir,—Understanding that you are a friend of Professor ADLER, of this University, and know his brother, I take the liberty of calling your attention to his present condition.—During the last winter he gave various indications of a disordered mind, and these have become more decided during the past summer. I am distressed to see his haggard look, and have feared unhappy results. He is unfitted for the business of teaching, and his friends would do well to get him another institution, adapted to such, away from study. I think there should be no delay in the matter.—We all esteem Dr. ADLER highly, and would be delighted with his restoration to the full use of his fine intellectual powers.

May I solicit your fraternal aid in this case, and please let me hear from you at an early day.

I am with great regard,

Yours,

UNIVERSITY OF CITY OF }  
NEW-YORK, *Sept.* 19th, '53. } (Signed)

ISAAC FERRIS.

## EPILOGOMENA TO LETTER III.

As the above letter was handed to my personal friends for the purpose of conveying the desired intelligence, and sent to me, when the report of my illness and mental derangement was found to be groundless and false, there can be no impropriety or breach of courtesy or justice in its publication. The serious consequences to which it gave rise, the deprivation of my liberty for six entire months, and the suspension of my functions as an academic instructor (though not of my activity as an author, which under the most inauspicious circumstances was still continued) alike demand, that it should be made known in connection with my own communications before and during my imprisonment. A comment or two will exhibit the contents of the Doctor's epistle in their proper light.

1st, The Dr.'s. letter is itself a contradiction and an egregious symptom of insanity on his part, which is, moreover, confirmed by his previous conduct from his first entrance into the institution. In comparing the University with the Lunatic Asylum, I find that the former during the winter of 1852—'53 (I may add, ever since my return from Europe in

1850) was a far more disorderly and irrational place than the latter, where the occasional confusion or the perpetual (sane and insane) perversity of men is the lamentable, but natural and necessary (consequently *irresponsible*) result, of an internal physical or intellectual disorder or defect, which is moreover susceptible of classification and of a psychological exposition, while in the former it was "got up" for the particular purpose of subjugation or of expulsion, and where consequently it was the result of *responsible* perversity and malice, *susceptible of moral reprobation*.

2d, The allegation of my being "unfitted for the business of teaching," and of the propriety of finding me "another institution, adapted to such, away from study," is an absurd and a libelous perversion of the truth, which it is scarcely worth while to refute. From the year 1839, the year of my matriculation at the institution, to the present hour I have had no other profession, except that of having appeared in the additional capacity of an author. Even during my undergraduate career I taught successfully the various disciplines of our academic course, with the approbation and to the satisfaction of the Faculty, members of which examined and admitted to promotion several of my private scholars, who had been expressly referred to me for tuition in the Classics, in Mathematics, in Philosophy, &c.—Of my courses of instruction since my official and regular connection with the institution (which dates from the year 1846) in the language and in the literature which I was more especially appointed to profess, it is not necessary to speak here, the University itself having offered but little inducement and no emolument or honor to the cultivation of the modern languages. In all the professional services, however, which I have had occasion to render to the institution of late years, my qualifications and my efficiency could never have been honestly or honorably questioned. I have prepared my own text-books, which have found their way into most of the literary and educational institutions of this continent to some extent into Europe even. One of them was begun at the very time, when "the indications of a disordered mind had become more decided," and was completed with scarcely a day's intermission of my work at the lunatic asylum, where I subsequently improved my leisure (as far as my shattered health would permit) by zealously engaging in some preliminary studies for a history of modern literature.—It is equally needless to expatiate on my extensive acquaintance, direct and indirect, with academic men and methods both in the United States and in Europe, where within a few years past I spent an entire year in the pursuit of literary and philo-



sophical studies at two of its most prominent Universities.—*To my morality, both private and social, and to my religion, no one but a hyper-purist religionist or a calvinistic tyrant could possibly object.*—The real objection, and the cause of my being unfitted for the business of instruction must therefore be looked for elsewhere. From various indications and from several catastrophies in my personal history, brought about by sectarian jealousy and fanatical intrigue, from certain significant changes in the faculty of the institution, and from innumerable efforts to subject me to a creed, or to the social control of certain religious parties, I should infer that it manifestly and palpably resided in a mistrust of what is vulgarly termed “the soundness of my views” on certain questions, never discussed in respectable literary institutions, and beyond their jurisdiction, or in other words *in a suspicion of heresy.*—I claim, however, in opposition to all these pretensions, which I deem an absurdity, my right (which is *inalienable and imprescriptible*) to my moral and intellectual culture, commenced under the auspices and fostering carê of my Alma Mater herself (during a former administration) and continued and perfected by years of serious and earnest effort in America and Europe, since. *I recognize no sectarian guidance or control whatever in any of the independent sciences, cultivated from time immemorial at academic institutions, much less in the science of sciences, the very law and indispensable condition of which is absolute freedom from all external authority or restraint.* The law of intellectual freedom, of which the Reader will find a short exposition in the concluding document of this pamphlet (which I have extracted and translated from a distinguished authority on the “Philosophy of Right”) is recognized by the spirit and the letter of the Constitution and by the political and social history of the United States, by the Revised Statutes of the State of New-York, by all the leading universities of *Protestant and Catholic Europe*, and by a number of similar institutions in America, among which stands, “professedly” at least, the University of the city of New-York. The attempts of certain parties in connection with the institution and *ab extra* to “smother” (to use one of their own cant words) and to crush my independence by gravely endeavoring to *coerce me into an alliance with a questionable religionism, which is abhorrent to my ideas, my habits and my sentiments, and by fomenting internal disorders for the purpose of effecting an exclusion*, are an unconstitutional, an unjust, an iniquitous invasion of my most sacred rights as a man, an American citizen, a scholar and a professor. I repel, therefore, Dr. FERRIS’ insinuation as a maliciously astute and as a

false one, which of itself declares the Dr. *incompetent to decide upon the merits of a real scholar, and utterly unfit for the important trust of presiding over the interests of any other but a sectarian institution of the narrowest description, of the most painfully exclusive moral perversity.*

To this I may add, that in consideration of the many and various disciplines, earnestly and steadily cultivated by me for several years past, such as intellectual philosophy, the learned and modern languages, linguistics and the history of literature generally, I could in academic justice *demand the right* to instruct in any one of the departments for which I was fitted. That such a right exists, and that it is applicable to my case, the reader may learn from Sir WILLIAM HAMILTON'S *Essays on University Education*, recently republished in America, to which I refer *passim*. I can therefore confidently challenge not only the chancellor, but, in case of a concurrence in his sentiments, the entire faculty of the University to the following proposition:—In case my capacity to teach or lecture academically is questioned, I propose to take, and I demand one of the following chairs; *where under suitable auspices and with proper and regular provisions for the maintenance of order, I could at once begin*:—1st, The Latin language and literature.—2d, the Greek ditto, ditto.—3d, Moral and intellectual philosophy, either systematically or historically.—4th, History or the general history of literature (of which I have at present a text-book in preparation).—5th, Linguistics or the classification of languages, including general grammar.—6th, the history of modern (European) languages and literatures.—7th, the elements of the Sanscrit, of which I still have a Mss. grammar, compiled by myself for my private use, during the winter of 1851.—I omit mentioning the remaining academic disciplines, for which I have no particular taste, but which I still could teach, and for which I could prepare the text-books, if it were necessary to do so.

3d, The alleged indications of insanity were *utterly unfounded* at the time they were made. I had recovered my usual health and spirits immediately after the commencement of last year, about the beginning of July '53, when those who had flagrantly disturbed the quiet of my residence in and about the University building had vanished into the country. Of the winter of 1852—'53 I only recollect, that subsequently to the dismissal of my class, which I could not in honor consent to hear any longer, I made a fruitless attempt to continue my private studies, and to finish a commentary on a Greek drama which I had begun at the commencement of the term, and that the ominous symptoms of *external insanity* about me soon increased to such an alarming extent, that I was

forced to lay aside my pen, unable to endure the outrage and annoyance any longer ; that gangs of scandalous ruffians in the shape of boys, girls, men and women, many of whom I knew by their voices, kept up at certain intervals, by day and by night, a nefarious system of mystification and of nuisance from January to the end of June, in the council-room of the institution, in the hall, before my door, in front of my window, and on the parade ground ; that in consequence of all this my rest at night was completely broken, until I could only sleep by day ; that after a while I was confined to my bed most of the time, and that I frequently did not rise for breakfast till 6 o'clock, P. M. ; that it was painful and disgusting for me to be awake, and that all I read for several successive months was "Hegel's Logic" for two or three hours a day, and that for some time I only eat once a day. In May, I think, I fled to a neighboring State and University, partly with the intention of changing my place of residence.—As a psychologist I was well aware, that sleep was a sovereign preventive, as well as a remedy for all the disorders of the mind, especially for those which might arise from external causes such as those I have just described ; I therefore anticipated and *prevented* the unhappy consequences which the Dr. seems to have expected from the outrageous nuisance of his cherished institution, where such scenes of scandal only *date from the time his prospective and his actual entrance on the duties of his office*, and really seem to have been made to order, I know not for whose benefit (certainly not for mine). *During the summer I was*, in consequence of the happy reaction and repose, *unusually gay and regular in my work*. I then wrote an introduction to Schiller's Maid of Orleans, another one to Gæthe's Iphigenia, and a third to Tieck's Puss in Boots, all of which have since been published in my new Manual of German Literature. I deny, therefore, having ever given any symptoms of insanity whatsoever at any time of the year, while I admit that a renewal of the scandal (which the parties concerned have endeavored to revive since my release this spring, but which I checked by a speedy notice to the police court and to some of my friends), in the autumn might have led to such calamitous results. Neither my Kant, nor my Rauch, nor my Hegel, nor any other philosopher or psychologist could for one moment be induced to admit, *that the presence of external causes and tendencies to intellectual derangement were necessarily attended or followed by the malady itself*. This would be an egregious logical fallacy, to which no intelligent physician in or out of the Lunatic Asylum could for one moment subscribe, without justly incurring the risk of being charged with an



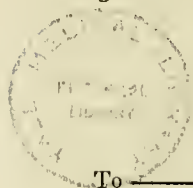
inexcusable lack of professional knowledge and experience or what is still worse, with a criminal connivance at an unjust and iniquitous conspiracy against the reputation and the life of an American citizen. To the charge of the folly of suffering so long and so severely from so gross a system of disorder which might have speedily been checked by the extra-academic authorities of the city, I can only reply, that the confusion and the consequent embarrassment was so great, that it was impossible for me at the time to come to any decision as to the course to be pursued. The most advisable policy would have been, to have left entirely, and to have directed the correction or the punishment from a distance. The following letters, written from the Lunatic Asylum (*between which and the University there was a manifest internal harmony, and which was evidently commissioned to complete the work of humiliation and of subjugation*), may serve to elucidate the facts of the case with some additional particulars.

To the above mentioned causes of the ruin of my health, I may add, that during the same winter I had an opportunity of witnessing a resurrection of "Salem Witchcraft," practiced on me by a certain lady, a mother in Israel of this city, who was manifestly in connection with the ultra-calvinistic faction of the University, which is the one to which Dr. Ferris is indebted for his elevation. I moreover discovered in the same connection, one of the two sources, from which the low insults in the street, at certain well-known hours of my walks, in certain places and directions, (to which I made allusion in my letter to the mayor of the city,) had emanated, and I received some additional light on certain events of my personal history, to which I allude in letter No. 5.—A father in Israel, a gray-headed sinner in my opinion, likewise informed me *that they had the Irish to defend them*.—I venture to assert that few of my countrymen, except perhaps the lowest rabble, would ever lend their aid to such nefarious purposes.

From all that I have had occasion to observe of social disorder and discontent in the city for several years past, I am sure that there are men who foment intestine commotions, who shamelessly and openly conspire against the honor and the interests, if not against the property and lives of their fellow-citizens, and whom the State ought to prosecute and punish as offenders against a clearly defined law of the statute-book.

My sanity at the the time of arrest I can establish:—1st, By the testimony of those who saw me daily, and more especially, by that of a young man, who came to see me frequently, after the reception of Dr. Ferris' letter, and who in fact brought it from the office. 2dly, By the

testimony of a distinguished physician, who about a week before, dressed a slight wound on one of my eye-brows, received from a fall against my sofa in the dark. 3dly, By the fact, that I was quietly and constantly engaged in writing, and in daily communication with the printer, who stereotyped my "Hand-book of German Literature." *Symptoms of unusual excitement, in consequence of such an outrage, are no proof of derangement.*



#### LETTER IV.

BLOOMINGDALE ASYLUM, Dec. 26th, 1853.

To \_\_\_\_\_, Washington, D. C.

Dear Sir,

For several years past, I have repeatedly been on the point of making an effort to resuscitate a slight, but to me no less cherished acquaintance, by giving you some account of my doings and purposes, which, I have sometimes flattered myself, might not be without interest both to yourself and to such of your co-adjutors in Washington, as have enlisted with you in the noble cause of extending and diffusing knowledge among men. Of the proceedings of your institution I have occasionally informed myself, both from the pamphlets and reports periodically submitted to the public, and more especially from the volumes of regular "Transactions," in the archæological and linguistical parts of which, I have taken so much the greater interest, as of late years my own attention has at times been almost exclusively directed to the same field of investigation. It is true, I have as yet neither been able nor willing to give any positive result of my studies. I have hardly done anything more than "to break the ice." This, however, I may safely say to have done, having not only had the best opportunities, (since I saw you last in 1848) of surveying the field in the time-honored centres of intellectual light on the other side of the Atlantic, but having also since my return, as a member of several Learned Associations, had special occasion and incitement to keep alive my interest in these engaging pursuits. And if there be any truth in the ancient adage: ἀρχὴν ἡμῶν παντός, I may perhaps even entertain the hope (*non invitâ Minervâ*) of some future concentration of my somewhat desultory excursions in these regions of light (where ignorance indeed, but ignorance alone, sees only darkness) to some radiant focal point. There are a number of subjects, closely connected with the inquiries, that come

under the cognizance of the historico-philosophical section of your institute, which, I see, are agitated anew by the *savants* of the old world, and which to the resolution of certain problems, relating to the primitive history of this continent, are equally important here, perhaps entitled to our special consideration. Recent investigations would seem to show, for example, that our genial and acute Du Ponceau had by no means said the last word on the subject he has so learnedly reported. Several new works on the origin and classification of languages, that have made their appearance in Berlin, &c., since the day of Humboldt's attempt, would seem to invite to similar efforts on our side, and with special reference to the immensity of our cis-Atlantic field, which ought to be κατ' ἐξοχήν adopted as our own. Having most of these materials at hand, I have sometimes been tempted myself to try, whether by an *exposition of the present state* of that science, as cultivated by the Germans particularly, a new impulsion might not be imparted to it among ourselves. Some such purpose has been among the tasks, which I had proposed to myself for the present winter. The sudden suspension of my studies, and the consequent uncertainty of my affairs, however, have so seriously deranged my plans, that now I almost despair of being able to accomplish any of my more immediate and necessary purposes.—You will undoubtedly be surprised to learn, that I have been an inmate of the Lunatic Asylum, at Bloomingdale, for now nearly three months; your surprise will be still greater, when you come to learn, by what sort of machinations I have been brought here.

For several years past, I have been made the object of a systematic and invidious persecution, in consequence of which I have been obliged to shift my residence from one place to another, to spend my means in involuntary exile and unnecessary travelling, and altogether to lead a life of a discouraging uncertainty.

Shortly after my visit to Washington, (1848), where I saw you last, I was driven away from New-York, while yet absorbed in the midst of an arduous undertaking, (my large German and English Dictionary, which in consequence of my forced removal from the place of printing, I had to finish at an inconvenient distance), under circumstances of the most aggravated insults and abuses, (such as I had never dreamt men capable of,) and about six months after its completion the same miserable clique had already "finished" me in Boston and a regular "*hedjra*" to Europe was the consequence.\*—I spent a year in London, Paris and

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\* The details of this scandalous act of vandalism, which though it nearly cost me my life, I did not even mention in the preface to my large German and English Lexicon, finished

Berlin, in a miserable struggle to repair my shattered health, (I had a cough, contracted from sheer vexation, while in the clutches of the miserable wretches, who seemed to be determined to vex me out of existence, which clung to me a year and ever and anon returns again,) and what was still more difficult, to forget the loathsome reminiscences of the immediate past by bringing myself in contact with the sanatory influences of the literature and art of the old world; partly with the intention of remaining there. I returned, however, in the hope of finding my difficulties subsided. But the same odious conspiracy, which had even contrived to mar my comfort and happiness in one place on the other side, (in Paris, where I spent the greater part of an academic year, at the University and libraries, in various studies,) had, as I found to my surprise, kept up a malevolent espionage over my peregrinations even, and I have since been subjected to a series of vexations and intrigues, which at times made me regret that I had not preferred any lot in a foreign land and among entire strangers to such an ignoble re-establishment at home. A personal attachment of former years was made use of to harass and lacerate my feelings, and an underhanded, venomous persecution, (which the parties, who were the authors, and who were in alliance with certain ecclesiastical tricksters, did not even blush to own), followed me at every step. The scum of New-York in

in the course of the same year, are too diffuse and complicated, to be noticed here. As the leading personages of this drama, however, were the representatives of powerful and influential ecclesiastical organizations, and as shortly before, repeated and desperate proselyting efforts had been made by some of these men, and by their miserable underlings, I cannot possibly be wrong in designating the vile commotion, by which I was swept from my post, *as the venomous explosion of ignoble and of bigoted elements*, which have in fact been the prolific source of all the confusion I complain of now. I distinctly remember the treacherous and inquisitorial anxiousness of a certain (now) president of a prominent University, (with whom I was reading *Logic*,) to become acquainted with German metaphysics, the mysterious meetings of a certain ecclesiastical committee, the efforts of a certain temperance coterie at a certain hotel, and a dozen other despicable conclaves and combinations, whose machinations were too palpable to be mistaken or forgotten. I also know, that a certain philosophy to which I was known to be particularly partial, is looked upon with jealous suspicion by certain superficial and insignificant pretenders to that science, whose ignorance and malice forges weapons of destruction out of the noblest and sublimest conceptions that have ever emanated from the intellect of man. To all these ambitious and noisy enemies of intellectual freedom, *whose littleness asperses, calumniates and levels whatever is gigantic and sublime*, I would here say, once for all, that if they could but rationally comprehend this Goethe, this Jean Paul, this Fichte, Kant and Hegel, whom they regard with so much horror, their *moral regeneration* would almost be beyond a doubt, and if they could think and write like them, their title to enduring fame would never need an advocate or petty trickster to defend it.



the shape of Negroes, Irishmen, Germans, &c., were hired, in well-organized gangs, to drop mysterious allusions and to offer me other insults in the street, (and thus I was daily forced to see and hear things in New-York, of which I had never dreamt before,) while a body of proselyting religionists were busy in their endeavors to make me a submissive tool of some ecclesiastical party or else to rob me of the last prospect of eating a respectable piece of bread and butter. This odious vice of certain countrymen of yours was in fact the prolific source of all the difficulties I complain of, and it is remotely the cause of my confinement here.

In the course of this last year, however, these manœuvres assumed a still more startling and iniquitous shape than before. Hitherto my *domicile* had been safe and quiet. For, although meddlesome attempts had been made to force certain associations on me and to cut me off from others, I had still been left sufficiently unmolested to accomplish some study without any flagrant interruptions. This last resource of self-defence and happiness was destroyed me at the beginning of last winter. New appointments at the University, (some of them degradations to me, at any rate, employed for *humiliating* purposes,) and the petty jealousies, nay even animosities, which among men of a certain order of intellect are the natural consequence of such changes, soon introduced disorder into the Institution, fostered a spirit of rebellion against me, and before the end of the first term of the present year, my course of instruction was entirely broken up. The difficulty (which in fact was wholly due to a shameless inefficiency of discipline,) was enveloped in a sort of mummerly, the sum and substance of which, however, was plainly this : "that if I remained in the Institution in the unmolested enjoyment of a peaceful life of study, my independent progress would be an encroachment on certain colleagues of mine ;" and this was in fact, thrown out as a hint for me to leave. The rent of my private room in the building had *already been nearly doubled* by Prof. J. ——— for the same reason. As the University, however, had contributed but an insignificant item to my support, I neither considered it necessary to remove from the building, which is accessible to all classes of tenants, nor did I make much account of a self-made suspension of my course, although I grieved to think of the means that had been used to superinduce such a necessity. Prof. L——, who has always exhibited a pettiness of disposition, altogether unworthy of a man of science, had *openly before my eyes* played the confidant and supporter of a disorderly student, who on my motion was under college discipline, and the meetings of the faculty were made

so disgusting to me, that I could no longer attend to make my reports. New methods of annoyance were devised. The council-room of the Institution, next door to mine, was converted into an omnibus for noisy meetings of every description—religious gatherings in the morning—ominous vociferations during recitation time—obstreperous conclaves of students in the afternoon—and violent political town gatherings in the evening. Besides all this, the menials of the Institution were corrupted into unusual insolence towards me, (among them my special attendant,) and the vexations of this description became so annoying to me, that for some time I had actually to do my own chamber-work. I had almost forgotten to mention certain mysterious *desk*-slammings in the council-room, and equally significant and intimidating *door*-slammings, particularly at a room opposite mine, which communicates (I believe) with a private part of the building, now occupied by a dentist, (that sublime science having also found its way into our college,) at unseasonable hours of the night, sometimes accompanied with various remarks, one of which now occurs to me: "Oh, you are not one of us!" (sung in operatic style.) The quiet of my residence was, moreover, destroyed by horrid vociferations at all hours of the night before my very door, and regularly under my window, and these were made not only by students, (of which there were only a few, *supported in their insubordination*) but by an extra-academic body of men and women, certain zealous religionists and their impenitent coadjutors, evidently the abettors of my in-door enemies, *and by two of my colleagues*. A night or week of such proceedings would be enough to set a man crazy. What must be their effect if they continue for months? And yet expressions like the following were perpetually ringing in my ears:—"Go on!" "You *are* the man!" "You are *not* the man!" "Go on! no, stop!" (by the same voice in the same breath.) "Out of the Institution with that man!" (by the laurelled valedictorian of last year.) "Stand up!" (by Prof. C——, close to my door.) "He started with nothing!" (by the same voice in the same place). "Pray!" (by ditto.) "You have finished!" "Go away!" "Thank God, that that man is out of the Institution!" (by a lady member of a certain religious fraternity, on terms of intimacy with a certain prominent politician of the neighborhood.) "Pursue him, worm that never d-i-e-s!" (theatrically shrieked by the same voice.) "You are a dead man!" Dead, dead, dead, dead! (by the voice of a certain popular preacher.) "He is deceived, he is deceived!" (by the spokesman of a body of theological students in front of the neighboring Seminary, as I was passing.) And at times even: "Die!" "Break!" (on the supposition that I

was in embarrassed circumstances.) "*Whore!*" even was one of the delectable cries! To these I should add the mysterious blowings of noses (both within *sight* and *hearing*,) frightfully significant coughs, horse-laughs, shouts and other methods of demonstration, such as striking the sidewalk in front of my windows with a cane, usually accompanied with some remark: "I understand that passage so!" for example. A clique in the Historical Society, (where I had been several times insulted at the meetings,) and several religious coteries and secret organizations were evidently largely concerned in the business. To these noises and sounds corresponded an equally ingenious series of sights, so arranged as to leave no doubt whatever, but that the impressions of my sense of hearing were no delusion, and that there was no mistake about the authors. My spirits and health were completely shattered by the close of winter, and I crawled out a miserable existence, being confined to my bed most of the time, unable to do anything but to read an hour or two a day. The summer season emptied the University and the city, and I was relieved from the pressure. The repose was like a gift from heaven. A stout resolution soon consigned the terrors of the past to a *provisional* oblivion. I collected myself, recovered my usual composure and bodily strength, made arrangements for two additional text-books to my series, at which after the 1st of July I began to work steadily, in the hope of getting out of my pecuniary difficulty which the recent events of my life had entailed. One of these is now ready for publication and will appear in a short time. After I had fairly recovered the proper balance of mind, I wrote to the Mayor of the city, and to Dr. Ferris, the Chancellor of our University. To the former I complained of persecution *ab extra*, which might be stopped by police intervention, of the latter I demanded explanations for personal vexations and insults. Besides having connived at, nay participated in the disorders of the Institution, and besides having employed the menials of the establishment to enforce a ridiculous submission to an unconstitutional authority, the Dr. had in the presence of the Alumni of the Institution, convened at a banquet in the Astor House, openly insulted me by saying; "*Shall I have to become the step-father to that man?*" and again: "*Next year I shall see another man in that man's place!*" Both these expressions were used by the Dr. as he stood before the assembled guests, while making a short speech. In uttering them, he looked at me with a supercilious grin, and the question was addressed to the opposite side of the house, between which and the speaker there was a manifest collusion. My letter consisted of a protestation against the scandalous disor-

ders of the Institution in general, and a request that the Dr. would retract the obnoxious offer of an unacceptable paternity as publicly as it was made, to include also a recantation of the words: "*Death you shall have!*" uttered near the door that connects my room with that of the Dr's., *in his own voice* and in connection with a declamation of Patrick Henry's famous speech, "Give me liberty or &c." This letter of mine was answered by spectral demonstrations (not unlike those of ghost-rappers,) in the Chancellor's room (next to my private study) between 11 and 12 o'clock on the night after its delivery, and by the insolent behavior of the University scullion, who on the following day after many other impertinences told me: "*You must not speak so to the Chancellor, my son!*" No other reply was made, and no further notice taken of my complaint. And yet my deportment towards Dr. Ferris had never been disrespectful, while his whole course towards me had been singularly provoking and offensive. He seemed to be ignorant of the fact, that I was both an alumnus and an officer of the Institution, and that as such I expected to be regarded in the light of a gentleman and of a scholar. By ignoring my protestations the Dr. treated me like a freshman, while his goings in and out of the building and his degrading alliance with the menials of the Institution, who were the accomplices of the disorder, gave him the character rather of a mechanic's "boss" watching over an apprentice than of a dignified president of a respectable literary institution.

I had by that time, (the middle of September last,) almost wholly recovered my health; the horrid recollections of last winter having been supplanted by the amenities of my summer studies in solitude; and I had nearly completed one of the new text-books I had agreed to prepare. A week glided away—and two—the session commenced—I was quietly engaged in my own business, without making any overtures to commence my public duties. In fact, I hesitated about commencing at all. About the first of October, a young man, a nephew of mine, brought me a telegraphic despatch from a distant city, requesting a confirmation or denial of the report there circulated, that I was dangerously ill, unconscious of myself, &c., and in immediate imperative need of friendly aid, being neither mentally nor bodily able to take care of myself. As there was a mistake in the name of the enquirer, I considered the matter a hoax, got up for mischief or the amusement of some inquisitive party, and retorted an abrupt telegraphic: "*None of your business, sir!*" A few days after, I received a letter of complaint from my brother-in-law, of —, stating that the telegraphic enquiry had been made by himself, and with the kindest regard to my comfort; that a letter from Dr. Ferris to a brother



Divine of that city had been the cause of the sudden consternation among my relatives there. The Dr.'s letter was itself enclosed, having been surrendered to the party for whose benefit it was composed. In this letter the Dr. declares me *incompetent for the business of instruction*, alleges, that during the last winter I had given various symptoms of a disordered mind, which during the summer had increased (!!!) to such an extent, as to give serious alarm to the humane feelings of the Dr., and in consideration of which, he advises my friends "to take me at once away from study, to some institution adapted to such."

On the morning of the receipt of this intelligence (the 5th of Oct., I think,) I had just arranged my papers for my day's work, and in the best spirits and in excellent health, (deducting a cough which during the infamies of last winter I had contracted,) was about to begin preparing some copy for the printer. This strange way of answering a just complaint and grave accusations very naturally brought back the recollections of all the contumelies and horrors of last winter, than which the reign of terror has nothing more startling, save perhaps only the guillotine or the inquisition. The patience of Job could not have held out any longer. I went at once in search of the Dr., and finding him in conversation with Prof. Loomis, in the lecture room of the latter, asked him whether he had written the letter I held in my hands. His cool reply in the affirmative was itself an insult, made as it was in a manner, which confirmed my previous grounds of offence and the impression, that the Dr. would not remember that I was not an undergraduate in search of a step-father, but a gentleman and an officer of the college. Impatience and anger could not be restrained, and I told him that *he was a —— and a ——*! and read his epistle publicly in the recitation-room of one of my colleagues, and in the hall of the University, at the same time inveighing in somewhat violent terms against the disorders of last winter. The result was general amazement.—My conduct may be considered too hasty by many. It is true I might have acted more rationally and calmly. As it is, however, so flagrant an outrage deserved exposition, and the production of *such* a statement made after *such* provocations is not only a justifiable act of self-defence, but a merited punishment of intrigue and falsehood, which I shall never have occasion to regret. Few men after such scenes would have stopped short at mere words. From the "*Take care!*" of Proff. L.——— and J.———, (who were criminally involved in the conspiracy of '48,) I inferred, that something was coming; indeed, I myself inquired, whether they were going to let

such a grave matter rest without notice, as they had done with all my lenient protestations.

Two days after, on coming home from a walk, I was arrested by two officers of the police, consigned to a low prison for several hours, and without trial, (which was said to be over,) and without any legal counsel, *converted into an insane man by the oath of two physicians*, (one of them quite a young man,) who pretended to found their opinion on an examination of about ten minutes, and since then I have lived among lunatics in the asylum, from which I date this letter. My asseverations and objections before the justice were in vain. Dr. Ferris and a Wall-street broker cosily persuaded the judge in my presence, "to make me comfortable!" I have since finished the volume I had begun, though my absence from my library obliged me to leave it less perfect than I had intended to make it. For this purpose I was rational enough, it seems. I venture, moreover, to assert, that in all other respects (save only the obstinate affirmation of the *reality* of the scenes of last winter, which I am absurdly expected to deny,) my conduct *since* my imprisonment here has been found to be that of a man in the full possession of all his intellectual powers. Nor can the physician at the head of this institution conscientiously confirm either the sentence of the judge, or the affidavit of his professional brethren. I look upon it as perjury and a miserable shift to evade the real case of complaint, if any there be. A rational trial before a tribunal, where each side of the question could have been produced, would have been the part of honorable men, conscious of their own rectitude, and of the justice of their cause. But what aggravates these proceedings, is the strange expectation that I should humbly acquiesce in the supposititious incrimination of having been too unsafe to be left at large, of having been really incapable mentally and physically to take care of myself—and the still more singular menace of *swearing me perpetually crazy, and of effecting a permanent abridgment of my liberty*, in case I should attempt to defend myself, either legally or with my pen, against so palpable and serious infraction of the dearest rights of an American citizen. The scenes of last winter, of which I have given you but an imperfect outline, which were got up for the purpose of consolidating the power and preponderance of my adversaries, and of frustrating my efforts to defend my position in my usual way, i. e., by giving positive proof of my ability by actual services to the cause of academic education—*these scenes of scandal and of terror I am expected to call a delusion of my senses, and thus to falsify my personal*



*history, accuse my consciousness of mendacity, and literally to aid and abet the iniquity of my aggressors.*

The day before my arrest, *I was solicited* by a number of students to commence my course, which I consented to do by the beginning of the following week, and as this year I had already the proof-sheets of several disquisitions on German literature in my hands, I could have begun publicly and under the most favorable auspices. But it would seem that these gentlemen were determined that I should *not* begin, and that they adopted this most admirable and effectual method of anticipating my perfectly regular and legitimate movements. Indeed, by the enquiry, "*What are you going to do?*" I have already been desired to infer, that an entire abandonment of my profession was expected of me. Its exercise had already been rendered as difficult as possible, several members of the Council having for several years past virtually superseded me by encouraging two other men on the same spot, which I in all honor was entitled to occupy myself, and which contained hardly room enough for one. What would Humboldt, Grimm, Ampère, Burnouf, and some of our other friends on the other side of the water say to such proceedings? I am reduced to penury, when from my public position I might be expected to be independent, I am deprived of the liberty of academic instruction by the terrorism of a narrow-minded clique, while successfully and diligently engaged in adding fresh honor to my post, I am bereft of freedom altogether by men, who owe their power to the fortuitous concurrence of local and sectarian influences, who are utter strangers to the large humanity of liberal culture, and who are too ignorant to decide upon the merits of a man of letters, being themselves destitute of both name and place among those who represent the literary and scientific enlightenment of our age and country. But I have wearied your patience already too long. I should like to have my case properly understood at Washington, and you will pardon my having burdened you with so much of the detail. In regard to my future movements I am uncertain. Supposing even my liberation to be near at hand, it will be difficult to commence in the midst of winter in the city, where all educational arrangements are made in the autumn. This fact was well known to those who have tied my hands. Several educational works I am anxious to complete, one particularly, at which I was interrupted a year ago this month.

I am, with great consideration,

most respectfully and truly

Yours,

G. J. ADLER.

## L E T T E R   V

BLOOMINGDALE ASYLUM, Nov. 17th, 1853.

My dear sir,

In reply to yours of the 12th inst., I can say what I might have said on the first day of my confinement; that neither the chancellor nor any one else at the University can have or ever could have any apprehension whatever of being molested by me in any place or in any manner whatever, *provided they mind their own business* and cease to give me any further provocation. The Chancellor's conduct was pre-eminently odious, and beneath the dignity of his office. His letter, which I still hold in my hands, is as ludicrous as it is false. He is certainly very much mistaken in supposing that by his tiny authority he can so easily crush a scholar and a professor of my reputation and "standing." "Proud of my connection with the University and anxious to secure my co-operation," when but a month before he solicited the "fraternal aid" of a distant brother divine in his attempt to ship me out of the city as a sick man, of a distempered mind, concerning whom he was most deeply and devoutly concerned, and (what is still more strange,) of a man whom he pronounces "unfitted for the business of instruction?" This is his own language and this is the whole discovery, the *dénouement* of the dirty transactions by which I was harassed last winter. I admit that my conduct may be regarded as too hasty. I might have defended myself in a calmer, more dignified and more effectual manner. As it is, however, I shall make no apology and I still think, that a month's imprisonment in the Tombs or a severe castigation of a tangible description last winter would have conferred a lasting moral benefit on certain persons in that institution. In making this remark, I by no means intend to throw out any menace, nor would I myself like the office of Knout-master-general either to his imperial majesty at St. Petersburg, or to his excellency the Governor, or to the President of the United States; but I refer simply to the moral good that would undoubtedly have accrued to the souls of certain students and professors at the University during the last winter from a dose or two of the "good old English discipline." As to the infamous and unearthly noises that worried and distracted me for at least six months, the ruin of my health and the entire suspension of my studies were too grave a result to be easily overlooked or forgotten, and the ignoble and bigoted clique at the bottom of that brutal terrorism have certainly not failed to leave a lasting impression of their



power on my mind. No denial or assurance to the contrary will ever invalidate the evidence of my senses. What I saw with my own eyes, and heard with my own ears at the time I complained, is as true as are the phenomena of my present experience. The guillotine alone was wanting to cap the climax of those high-handed proceedings. It was a repetition of the same narrow vandalism which in 1848 exiled me out of the city, and in 1849 made me leave America in disgust. While I therefore disclaim cherishing or ever having cherished the remotest desire to molest the peace or safety of any member of the faculty—the fear of corporal punishment betrays a bad conscience on the part of my adversaries and is a virtual admission of their guilt, or else it is a fiction invented to patch up a hopeless case ;—I would at the same time assure all those concerned in this business, that I am not an advocate of non-resistance or of tame submission to such a gross injustice, and that in case of need I can wield a pen to defend my rights before an intelligent public, the opinion of which in matters of this kind, in America particularly, is after all the last and highest instance of appeal.

The case is therefore perfectly plain. I deny having ever given any just cause of apprehension to any man in the institution. The very supposition is an absurdity. *They* are the iniquitous aggressors throughout. They have endeavored to crush my intellectual independence by carrying the principle of conformity to a ridiculous extent, and by enforcing a submission to which no man of honor without the loss of all his intellectual powers could submit.—I told the chancellor on the spur and in the excitement of the moment what I thought of the falsehoods contained in his epistle and of his previous conduct which, if he is a gentleman, he is bound to justify. He gravely ignored the letter of complaint I had addressed to him a month before, or rather answered it by spectral demonstrations the night after its reception. Such mummery and such terrorism, practiced on an officer of a literary institution by a fellow-officer is surely out of place and Dr. FERRIS has not yet learnt (it seems) the meaning of an A. M. and of certain other rights of Academic men, (to say nothing of the courtesy customary among men of letters of every age and in all civilized countries), to introduce or suffer such singular proceedings in a respectable institution. As for myself I do not intend to be intimidated in the least, and if my life and health last, I shall find the means of defending both my honor and my position as a gentleman and a scholar. It is all idle to attempt to crush or gag a man by terror. The humbug of the spirit-rappers is no greater than the jugglery of door-and-desk-slamming, of vociferations and mystifications so suc-

cessfully employed at the University during the whole of last winter. As it regards therefore my alleged insanity on these points, I must confess, that if a *denial* of the *reality* of this terrorism by which the University (and certain societies) have carried on their nefarious business of subjugation, be required of me, then I can *never* become rational again without adding falsehood to cowardice. It smacks too much of the outrage of '48, when I *was compelled* to admit the most damnable affronts as delusive impressions of my senses and when other men's infernal-pit-iniquity was alleged to be the offspring of my own tobacco-fume! This is subjectivism with a vengeance! It is too big a pill to swallow. It produces rather too great an excess of abdominal convulsions, as the Doctors would say.

If by my conduct I have incurred any censure or violated any law, or menaced the safety or the life or property of any man in or out of the institution, why in the name of reason and of common sense do not these gentlemen proceed in the regular way, to secure exemption from the fear of danger? Could they not have legally coerced me to keep the peace? or could they not (a still more rational course) have requested a committee of the council to meet for the purpose of examining and adjusting a matter of such grave importance? Could I not and can I not now expose the hollow misery of the sham, the real nature of which is as plain as the noon-day sun? The course they have adopted is surely derogatory to the moral integrity of the parties concerned, and my stay among lunatics and maniacs is an unpardonable abuse of an excellent institution. The day before my arrest, eight young gentleman volunteered to commence the study of the language which I more especially profess and I had engaged to begin with a public lecture in the Monday following. These proceedings rob me now, for this winter at least, of the only advantage, which my connection with the institution affords me, and it is manifest enough that the difficulty was "got up" for the express purpose of anticipating and of frustrating my preparations for the present semestre.

It still seems to me, that these gentlemen incriminate themselves in two ways:—1st, By desiring me to remove out of the building, they incur the suspicion of being themselves the authors or abettors of the nuisance I complain of. I would propose to have some one stay with me and to retain and pay for my study as usual. In that event I should have a witness and the detection and punishment of the offenders would exonerate all those who in case of my removal would have part of the criminal credit of molesting the private residence of a professor and a

scholar. 2d, The fear of personal injury from the hands of one, who for many years past has been known to be a man of peaceable and unexceptionable behavior and who never attacked or struck any man in his life, appears to have its origin in a consciousness of guilt and to be a virtual admission of it. Do they perhaps think their conduct so outrageous, that the meekness of Moses could no longer endure it without resentment? I grant that a passionate man would be likely to take a more substantial revenge. I myself however have no inclination to degrade myself in any such way.—My confinement is on a false pretense, and if any made affidavit to my insanity, they most assuredly must have perjured themselves. Whatever I did, I have been provoked to do by what I deem a stupidity and a *flagrant invasion of the rights and privileges of an academic instructor, which no language can castigate with adequate severity.*

I am most respectfully and truly  
your obedient servant.

D. A. & Co., NEW-YORK.

G. J. A.

## VI. THE LAW OF INTELLECTUAL FREEDOM.

"All property or rather all substantial determinations, which relate to my personal individuality and which enter into the general constitution of my self-consciousness, as for example, my personality proper, my freedom of volition in general, my morality, my religion are *inalienable* and the right to them is *imprescriptible*."

"That that which the mind is *per se* and by its very definition should also become an actual existence and *pro se*, that consequently it should be a person, capable of holding property, possessed of morality and religion—all this is involved in the idea of the mind itself, which as the *causa sui*, in other words, as a free cause, is a substance, *cujus natura non potest concipi nisi existens*. (SPINOZA, Eth. S. 1. def. 1.)."

"This very notion, that it should be what it is *through itself alone* and as the self-concentration or endless self-retrosusception out of its mere natural and immediate existence contains also the possibility of the opposition between what it is only *per se* (i. e. substantially) and not *pro se* i. e. subjectively, in reality) and *vice versa* between what is only *pro se* and not also *per se* (which in the Will is the bad, the vicious);—and hence too the possibility of the *alienation* of one's personality and of one's substantial existence, whether this alienation be effected implicitly and unconsciously or explicitly and expressly. Examples of the alienation of personality are slavery, vassalage, disability to hold property, the unfree possession of the same, &c., &c."

"Instances of the abalienation of intelligent rationality, of individual and social morality and of religion occur in the beliefs and practices of superstition, in ceding to another the power and the authority of making rules and prescriptions for my actions (as when one allows himself to be made a tool for criminal purposes), or of determining what I am to regard as the law and duty of conscience, religious truth, &c."

"The right to such inalienable possessions is imprescriptible, and the act by which I become seized of my personality and of my substantial being, by which I make myself an accountable, a moral and a religious agent, removes these determinations from the control of all merely external circumstances and relations, which alone could give them the capacity of becoming the property of another. With this abnegation of the external, all questions of time and all claims based upon previous consent or acquiescence fall to the ground. This act of rational self-recovery, whereby I constitute myself an existing idea, a person of legal and moral



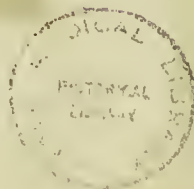
responsibility, *subverts the previous relation and puts an end to the injustice which I myself and the other party have done to my comprehension and to my reason, by treating and suffering to be treated the endless existence of self-consciousness as an external and an alienable object.*"\*

"This return to myself discloses also the contradiction (the absurdity) of my having ceded to another my legal responsibility, my morality and my religion at a time when I could not yet be said to possess them rationally, and which as soon as I become seized and possessed of them, can essentially be mine alone and can not be said to have any outward existence."

"It follows from the very nature of the case, that the slave has an absolute right to make himself free; that if any one has hired himself for any crime, such as robbery, murder, &c. this contract is of itself null and void and that every one is at full liberty to break it."

"The same may be said of *all religious submission to a priest, who sets up for my father confessor (step-father, &c.)*; for a matter of such purely internal interest must be settled by every man himself and alone. A religiosity, a part of which is deposited in the hands of another is tantamount to none at all; for the Spirit is one, and it is he that is required to dwell in the heart of man; the union of the *per* and *pro se* must belong to every individual apart."

\* I emphasize this important clause for the particular benefit of those who in my personal history have had the absurd expectation that I should continue to entertain a respectful deference to a certain phase of religionism, which upon a careful and rational examination I found to be worthless and which is repugnant to my taste and better judgment, and of others who with equal absurdity are in the habit of exacting ecclesiastical tests (I will not say religious, for such men show by their very conduct that their enlightenment in matters of the religion of the heart is very imperfect) for academic appointments;—as if the science and the culture of the nineteenth century were still to be the handmaid of the church, as they were in the Middle Age; as if *Philosophy and the Liberal Arts could ever thrive and flourish in the suffocating atmosphere of the idols of the cave, the idols of the tribe, and the idols of the market-place!*

[illegible]



5

